

Resolution Regarding the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Efforts to Improve its Regulatory Processes

WHEREAS, State public utility commissions are concerned with the costs of the nuclear industry's compliance with Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) regulations, in that these costs are passed on to the states' ratepayers; *and*

WHEREAS, Several State legislatures and public utility commissions have enacted legislation and issued orders establishing electric competition in their States, and several other states are considering similar actions; *and*

WHEREAS, Utilities including nuclear utilities, in States with and without electric competition, are reorienting themselves to become more competitive, and are seeking additional ways to reduce their costs; *and*

WHEREAS, The safety and reliability of the nuclear industry has improved markedly over the last decade, as evidenced by a decrease in the number of automatic shutdowns, a decrease in the number of significant safety problems, and a decrease in the number of outages caused by equipment problems; *and*

WHEREAS, There is concern that the NRC's regulatory approach fails to recognize the improvements achieved by the nuclear industry in the areas of safety, reliability, and economic performance; *and*

WHEREAS, The Senate Subcommittee on Clean Air and Wetlands, Private Property, and Nuclear Safety, at a July 30, 1998 hearing on NRC regulatory activities, expressed concerns regarding the timeliness and the consistency of NRC decisions; *and*

WHEREAS, The NRC has acknowledged that some of its regulatory activities could be improved to remove inefficiencies to mitigate subjective standards and improve clarity; *and*

WHEREAS, The NRC has responded to the concerns expressed by the nuclear industry, Congress, and public interest groups by revamping its inspection and oversight program for commercial nuclear power plants to focus its attention on activities where potential risks are greater and on plants that have experienced performance problems; *and*

WHEREAS, The NRC's proposed nuclear plant oversight program is anchored in the NRC's mission to ensure the continued public health and safety in the operation of such nuclear plants; *now, therefore, be it*

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened at its 1999 Winter Meetings in Washington, D.C., urges the NRC to be cognizant of the potential impact deregulation may have on the safety and reliability of nuclear plants; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That NARUC supports efforts by the NRC to improve its current regulatory processes, while at the same time maintaining a high level of safety, as those efforts will likely result in more efficient and less costly interaction between the NRC and nuclear plant licensees.

*Sponsored by the Committee on Electricity
Adopted February 24, 1999*